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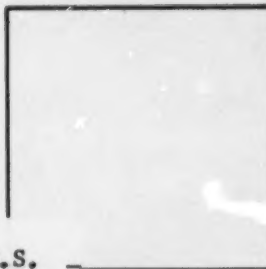
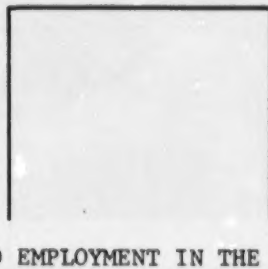
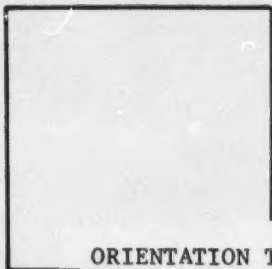
ABSTRACT

One of a series of refugee orientation materials, this guide to employment is intended to assist Chinese speaking refugees in their understanding of the employment situation in the United States and to give them necessary information for obtaining work. The text is in Chinese followed by an English-language version, which is not an exact translation but which gives the substance of the foreign language part. The topics covered in the guide are the following: (1) American attitudes towards employment and what goes into a decision about job qualifications and choice; (2) a list of questions about job choices and suggested answers that deal with skills, pay, entry-level jobs, fringe benefits, and expectations about hours of work; (3) the process of getting a job, including using employment agencies, preparing for the interview, and making a decision about a job once it is offered; (4) factors that are important for keeping a job, particularly dependability and responsibility; (5) relations with supervisors and co-workers; (6) considerations involved in deciding to change jobs; and (7) advantages of developing new skills through adult education programs. A convenient checklist of things to consider in getting a job concludes the guide. (AMH)

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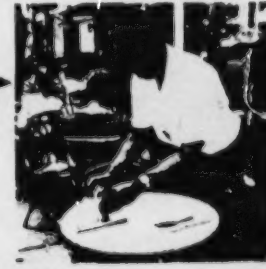
ORIENTATION TO EMPLOYMENT IN THE U.S.
FOR REFUGEES--CHINESE

在美國工作

(An English version follows the Chinese)



華裔新僑 指南



Center for
Applied Linguistics

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在美國工作

華裔新僑
指南

美國人十分重視工作。不論男女老幼均工作。謀生及尋求個人或家庭幸福是人們努力工作的主要原因。婦女在美國勞工界亦十分活躍。各行各業均有婦女參與。職業婦女並不比男士遜色。很多美國人雖屆退休之年，却有工作能力和興趣而拒絕接受六十五歲退休的觀念。父母常讓子女在中小學課餘做些雜工和家務，來奠定子女未來工作的基礎並藉此教育子女珍惜金錢。也有人熱愛工作來消磨時間。

美國人終日忙碌。人們不是日間工作晚上唸書，便是晚上工作日間唸書以尋得更多的知識、技能和英語能力而求上進。因此，你會發現很多美國人利用他們的閒暇去賺錢或求學。

一般來說，美國人一般不如亞洲人有傳統的士大夫觀念（猶如士農工商階級顯著之分）。低微

工人與高尚工人在公共場所獲得同樣的待遇。自力更生的人，儘管工作如何低微，沒有任何自卑和羞怯的感覺，反之，還感到驕傲。只有不長進和自甘墮落的人才受人輕蔑。同樣，我們也常以「工作無分貴賤」和「行行出狀元」的諺語來自勉。況且，美國是一個充滿發展機會的國家，只要你願意吃苦，絕不怕沒有「揚眉吐氣」的日子。

美國人對「白手起家」的人十分敬佩，那是指一些願意吃苦，不畏艱鉅，從最困難的，底層或甚至無基礎的開始，長期努力奮鬥，力求上進直到成功為止的人。在美國，「亞伯拉罕·林肯」是一個典型的例子。他是最受美國人敬佩的總統之一。他出身寒微，努力不懈，勤奮向學，結果成為舉世尊敬的總統。

大部份美國人相信，美國是一

個機會多的土地這是無可否認的，但這並不表示人人却有工作，求職立業完全要靠個人的努力。我們亦要面對現實，勿過份樂觀或期望過高。很多新僑民來到美國，不是期望太高，便是操之過急。目前美國正在經濟不景氣，通貨膨脹，失業人數日增。很多城市缺乏足夠的住屋。這意味着有些難民在求職或找合適的住屋時將遭遇到困難。處在這種困難時期，你可能在找工作時沒有多大選擇。你應忍耐和保持信心。美國歷史曾證明，不景氣過後，好景將重現。在經濟不景氣期間，有工作總比失業的好。你可能要暫時接受不滿意的工作。最不滿意的工作亦能使你得益，多吸取在美國的經驗和建立良好的「工作紀錄」（work record）。這在美國求職來說是不可缺少的。有時接受夜間或不理想、低薪

的工作總比就在家裡等候時機到來為好。縱使富裕也不宜「坐吃山空」。遊手好閒或不務正業的人到處不受歡迎。

初來美國，人地生疏，要想在此地重整旗鼓，一時談何容易。謀生立業未必能在短時間內有成就。如我們有好的機遇能找到自己專才的工作，發揮所長，這是最好不過的。但有時，由于環境不同，加上工作上各種要求與困難，我們未必能找到理想的工作，為了謀生我們不得不面對現實，接受任何工作機會。

有時候，你要知變通。例如，你未做過司機，但懂得如何駕駛汽車，如今巴士公司或的士公司請人，便不妨一試。同時，不要低估自己的能力不敢嘗試而失去良好機會。當然，我們希望每人都能隨心所欲，不用如此屈就；但有時事非得已。

在美國剛出道或找不到理想工作的人多從「初入門工作」

(entry level job) 開始。故此，接受初入門的工作並不是一件羞耻的事。況且初入門的工作常提供學者吸取工作經驗和學習技能的機會。這些知識是申請薪金優厚和高職位時所不可缺少的。

缺乏工作經驗和技術文憑的人不容易尋找合適的工作。常常在應徵謁見時，雇主總會詢問你過去工作經驗，你的專長和興趣等。曾有工作經驗總比完全沒有經驗好，能讓雇主知道過去自己做過的事，就算與申請的工作沒有直接關係也是好的，因為未來雇主很想知道你是否是可靠、能幹和負責，所以在職時，無論做任何工作，也應盡力而為與雇主建立良好關係，他日另謀高就，雇主可大力推薦你的能力或發推薦

書給你。這些在未來求職時是十分重要的。

職業選擇

以下是在選擇工作時可能會有一些問題：

—所有初入門的工作都是一樣的嗎？

不，工作性質有區分的，薪金雖然低，但也有不同。

—我需要懂英語才能找到工作嗎？

不，有很多類工作不需要懂得多英語的。當然英語越好，求職機會越多。但甚至你已找到工作，你亦應繼續學英語。

—何時開始找工作？

你應盡快尋找工作，尋找工作並不表示你立即可以受聘。有時你要應徵多次才能成功。求職多次亦可使你珍惜工作，和了解勞工市場的要求。

—薪金問題重要嗎？

高薪金是人人嚮往的，但吸取工作經驗也很重要，有時接受高薪金工作，未必得益。在選擇工作時，你應考慮：

- 交通方便、費用、距離。
- 工作時間。
- 加班、晚上、週末或假日是否需要工作。

— 工資有多少？

目前國定最低時薪為三元三角五分（\$ 3 3 5 ）。

有些工作有小費可收時薪，當然不受這限制了。（例如，侍者、收盤碗工人等）。注意，不需太多經驗的工作，工資如果高，則可能有特別條件（可能是工作不清潔衛生或多少危險性），選擇工作前，你應了解清楚工作的性質，不要單為高薪所惑。

— 在考慮工作時，工作福利（醫藥保險、假期、年假、病假等

）有何重要？

大部份初入門的工作。福利不多。你可詢問醫藥保險，但一般來說，你主要應對工作表示興趣。很多雇主不大願意雇請對薪金和福利（而非對工作）興趣大的人。

— 工會是什麼？

有些公司、工廠，有工會組織。工會為保障職員福利而設。參加與否是自願的。但有些工會需要職業證明書和其他條件才批准入會。凡是會員，每月均要繳交會費。

尋找工作

尋找工作的秘訣包括：

— 衡量自己的技能、經驗和興趣，並決定你過去曾在僑居地或在難民營中做過的志願工作的經驗。在申請工作時是十分重要的。

一打聽勞工市場。了解勞工市場的需求。

一選擇對自己的技能、經驗和興趣最合適或對前途有利的工作。這或許是你考慮將來前途的時刻。

一積極找尋近乎心目中理想的工作，並盡早前往應徵。

尋找工作既困難又費時，對美國人來說也不例外。

以下是尋找工作可行的途徑：

一親友或擔保人：

親友和擔保人對於介紹工作特別有幫助。

一州立職業介紹所：

公共職業介紹所是免費的，且有輔導員（counsellor

）協助你尋找工作，介紹你前往應徵，如你不懂英語的話，你應自帶傳譯員。

一志願機構、教會和華僑互助會或服務中心：

這些機構常協助新來的難民或華僑尋找工作。

一各大廈通告招貼：

公共圖書館、私人企業公司和主要政府機關通常在固定的地方有招請職員的通告招貼。很多餐館在門窗外貼有「招請工人」（"Help Wanted"）的廣告。如你感興趣，不妨入內與經理或人事主任面談。

一報紙：

讀報亦是一種好方法。分類廣告中有很多就業機會。每欄小廣告均載有工作性質，要求，薪金、接洽人姓名或公司行號名、地址和電話號碼等。

一私人介紹所：

這些地方能提供你很多資料。但如經私人職業介紹所找到工作通常你或你的雇主要付一些介紹費。接受他們的幫助前，最好先問清楚各種條件並考

慮周詳。

申請工作：

- 當你找到工作空缺時，你可用電話或親自前往與雇主聯絡。雇主將安排謁見你的時間，目的是要認識你和清楚了解你的技能和工作經驗。同時，謁見亦是你向雇主詢問問題的機會。

謁見前應要作的準備：

- 準備英文的個人簡歷 (resume)
 - 。個人簡歷是一份工作中請人的過去職業、經驗、教育的說明書內容通常包括：
 - 你的姓名、地址和電話。
 - 社會安全號數。
 - 現在和過去雇主的姓名和地址。
 - 薪金、工作時期和各種職業。
 - 。（一切資料應根據時間性，以現在到過去的順序詳列。）

—教育程度：包括各種職業、技術訓練、日期、證書或學位。

—三位介紹人的姓名、地址和電話號碼（過去雇主、擔保人或朋友皆可充作介紹人）。

—其他經驗包括在社區教會或難民營中擔任的志願工作或活動。

個人簡歷在求職時是十分重要，可能具有決定性，故自己的長處應詳細列出來。簡歷表亦是自己的代表或前身。

應徵面談的應知事項如下：

- 攜帶社會安全證、難民身份證前往。這是用來證明你有合法身份和獲准在美工作。
- 如你不懂英語的話，你應自帶傳譯員。
- 攜帶個人簡歷。
- 準時：你應在約定時間前五分

鐘到達。美國人非常重視守時
和工作認真的。

—衣着保守一點與申請之工作相
稱。若你是男性，頭髮太長或
不修邊幅會給雇主一個壞印象
而對申請工作不利。個人清潔
猶為重要。

—充滿自信和鎮靜：與雇主面談
時，應充滿自信，使對方產生
好感並留下良好印象，並逐一
回答對方的問題，使對方相信
你既能幹又喜愛這份工作。

—要機智：不要詢問其他無關重
要的事，除非他（她）給你機
會發問。在謁見結束時，如雇
主沒有提及你的薪金和福利，
你可主動提出這些問題。

面談結束前，你可詢問雇主何
時可以知道結果。應徵工作並不
表示你必須受聘。雇主有時需要
數天或數週的考慮後才能決定是
否僱用你。如沒有接到回音，不

妨打電話或親往詢問結果。無論
如何你需要有耐性。同時在等候
佳音期間，你可繼續尋找其他工
作。看那一份先來和合意，再作
選擇和決定。

一旦獲僱用，有些事情需向雇
主或主管人士詢問清楚如：

工作時間：

每天上下班時間？

每週工作那幾天？

休息那幾天？

工作和責任是什麼？

頂頭上司是誰？

職業福利（健康、牙醫保險、
病假和年假等）。

什麼時候開始工作？

注意，非每間公司或工廠提供
的待遇、福利、工作環境及要求
皆相同。

薪金支票

開始工作後你每週、半月或每
月領取薪金一次。有些公司要保

存職員第一週薪。換言之，第二週末才發第一週的薪金。若辭職，薪金獲發還。

詢問清楚公司發薪政策，不要因公司的發薪政策不同而誤解雇主存心欺騙而造成尷尬局面，但一切你作為工人應享有的權利是有權問的。如有任何疑問，可向雇主或適當的人查詢。

如你獲介紹非你所願意接受的工作時，你應坦白拒絕接受，在接受了一份工作後，如果你又改變主意，你應盡早通知雇主，除非你決定同時做兩份工作，不要同時接受兩份工作一分身乏術，辦不到時易使兩面皆失。

保持工作

你或許會發現尋找工作比保持工作為困難，要保持一份好的工作，有數點的重要的事應考慮。你受僱是因為雇主認為你能稱職和能幹。他（她）也相信你將是

一位可靠的職員。「可靠」是保持工作最重要的因素之一。可靠亦即是當雇主分配你工作時，你是可以值得信賴而不致令雇主失望的。可靠亦表示準時上班。雇主任常把遲到或早退或在午餐休息時間留連忘返的職員視為沒有生產能力或草率的。

如有事故或近親等喪事（近親常指父母、配偶、兄弟姊妹、子女等，有時祖父母、叔伯父母等也算是近親；至於表兄弟姊妹則不能算是近親了）。不能上班或要晚到，你應立即通知主管或雇主。因雇主可能需要找人替工。一般來說，如你事先通知，雇主是會諒解的。沒有充分理由而遲到或缺席時，雇主認為你工作態度不認真和苟且。總而言之，如你欲請假，你應盡可能預先通知取得許可。

工作記時卡

有些公司使用「記時鐘」來登記職員上下班的時間。登記職員實際工作的時間是為計算薪金用的。因此，如你遲到或缺席，薪金會被適當地扣除，屢次遲到和慣性缺席亦是被開除的理由之一。

很多公司、工廠在週末、假日和其他特別日子休息。你應清楚公司確實的休假日。切記每家的放假日不一定相同，最適宜請教此問題的人是你的主管。

最後一點提示是在下班時，不要因為下班時間已到便把未做完的工作拋下不顧而急於下班。這些態度表現出你是一個斤斤計較和不負責任的人。有時，為博取雇主的歡心、信任和好評，多付出一點勞力或多做片刻只有利而無害。特別是在經濟不景氣公司

要裁員時，雇主當然會設法保留優秀、上進和苦幹的職員。例如，你負責處理一間商店。通常在六點鐘，你下班，在這時候，除你之外，店中已沒有其他職員在，接替人遲到，未能準時來接班。在這情形下，若你把店拋下不顧而下班，會被視為十分不負責任。你的接替人有責任準時來，但在這情形下，你對雇主也有義務。有些雇主為此可能會在盛怒下以不負責為理由把你和你的接替人立即開除。

如你能滿足雇主要求並做得好，你是應該可以保持你的職位了。在職時，如你有不明之處，可以發問。發問不是一件羞耻的事，雇主還鼓勵你發問的。這才能加強主管對你的信心。如有損壞或故障是因你沒有詢問清楚而發生時，你的主管會不高興的。也許你知道，主管是要對你的工作

負責，所以他（她）希望你在不明瞭時向他（她）請教。

有時候你會感覺主管對你的工作諸多挑剔。美國人通常靜心傾聽主管的批評並努力照主管的提議去做。你要在這方面向他們多學習，即是不要因主管批評而覺得難堪。切記他（她）的職責是要督促你們把工作做好，你亦可以再三詢問他你所做的是否正確。這是一種十拿九穩的方法。工作上的批評總是不能避免的，只要你能樂於接受批評並從批評中求改善，你會很快成功的。這些是工作經驗的一部份。所以這亦說明在美國雇主為何詢問職業申請人「工作經驗」的原因之一。有時，有些雇主確實過份挑剔，甚至吹毛求疵，向職員作不合理的要求，如有這種情形發生，你可以要求與主管私下面談，你可將你的感受告訴他。一般主管是

會檢討這問題並設法改善。有些主管會認為他（她）本身沒有改進的必要，甚至認為是你的不是，在這情形下，你可以小心衡量得失，考慮是否應該繼續做下去。

有時，工友或同事會取笑你，美國人常互相取笑，這是友善之舉，並無惡意（特別是男性的工友或同事）。初時要分別取笑是否友善並不容易，應付友善取笑的最好方法是學習能將其置之不理。如你能辦得到，他們的取笑便起不了作用，結果便只好罷休。切記如你感覺同事非但存心取笑你而且還刻意中傷，那麼你應對主管報說清楚他有何提議。切記美國人是喜歡互相開玩笑的，不久你將會領悟到開玩笑是友善的。你甚至可能會喜歡這種幽默。

與工友同事和好相處，幾乎與「可靠性」同樣重要。主管是會

注意到你與工友同事相處良好的能力亦將登記在你的「工作記錄」上。你要清楚公司、工廠或在工人之間有什麼特別的規定。這些是因地而異的。例如，有些工廠的工具是不共同使用的。如你需要某一用具，你可能需要直接詢問主管。有些工廠的規定則不同，同事共同使用公司用具。如你需要某一用具，恰巧你的同事不用時，當然你可向他借用。總而言之，各地規矩不同。最好是多觀察，和向主管或同事請教。

與公司同事和雇主和好相處，可靠和盡職是保持工作的重要的因素。

換 職

你總會有換職的時刻，不是你對目前的工作感到厭倦（美國人常有這種情形），便是你欲多賺些錢或想尋求新機會。你亦因可

能失去目前的工作而需尋找新工作。

如雇主業務遲滯，生意淡薄，公司可能要虧損或倒閉時，你和其他同事很可能要被裁員（解僱）。裁員與被開除不同。裁員表示公司因業務問題需要減少職員。公司業務問題與職員本身無關。但被開除則不同。大家均明白被裁的職員並不是因他們的過失而失業的，被開除常是因職員本身的過失。不是他（她）辦事無能，便是工作失責。如你因裁員而失業，通常你可以申請失業保險金。當然，你要符合失業保險的條件才能領到失業金，同時並要積極尋找另一份工作。大部份地區規定失業金最多可領取六個月。但注意並非每一間公司均有此種失業保險，你亦需要工作一段時間後才夠資格領取。失業金的金額可能比薪金低得多，倘若

公司裁員，你失去工作，不要難過，你的「工作記錄」並沒有受到不良的影響。因為這不是你個人的過失。離職時，你應向主管要求一張「推薦書」，有時，推薦書在求職時具有決定性。推薦書除介紹你的能力和才幹外，還解釋你失去工作的原因。失業之後，你很可能同時喪失在職時所有的福利如健康和牙醫保險等。

被開除的人於求職時常有困難。大部份美國人常把被開除視為一件十分嚴重的事。第一，凡因過失而被開除的人是沒有資格領取失業金的。第二，你將得不到一封好的推薦書。這將對你另尋新的工作有不良的影響。一旦你被開除過，你的「工作記錄」將畢生蒙上污點。每當你求職時，新雇主總要查問你過去的職業和離職原因，新雇主常常在決定僱用你之前會先與你以前的雇主聯

絡，若你虛報而被新雇主查出你說謊時，他（她）很可能就因此不僱用你，如你在職時已感到雇主對你在多方面不滿時，你應與他（她）私下面談，直接詢問他（她）你應否自動（在被開除前）申請辭職。大部份雇主通常在開除職員前會給他們自動辭職的機會。

如你頻頻辭職（例如只做兩個月後辭職）或你沒有給雇主充份時間通知便辭職，也會有不利的影響，這會被視為沒有工作興趣和不可靠。但如你工作了相當時間（例如六個月左右）後辭職，你不會被認為不可靠，如你決定辭職，慣例，你最少需要預先在兩週前通知雇主。切勿不辭而別或匆促辭職。這樣會損壞你在公司中的良好印象。常云「好頭不如好尾」辭職不是不光明的事，只要你有充份的時間，讓雇主準

備便可。他（她）會諒解的。除自動辭職和被開除外，還有別的情形，你需被迫辭職，例如，你在工作時受傷，不能工作，大部份職業均有工人賠償金，那是當你因公受傷時，你可以獲得的福利。通常你要證明你受傷是與工作有關的。工人賠償金是要經一段時間處理後才領得到的。你的公司可能替職員購買殘廢保險。你應向主管請教，你可得到什麼津貼或幫助。如你年事已高，你可能夠資格申請社會安全福利。這些福利是根據你過去工作時間長短和有無參加社會安全保險的工作而定。（並非每份工作均有這類保險）。當你認為你應另尋較好的工作時，你應從何着手呢？最謹慎的方法可能是不要先辭去目前的工作，除非確定新的工作已穩得，你亦不應告假去求職。（你的雇主若知道的話，很可

能在盛怒之下立即開除你）你可以通知雇主你打算在將來辭職，你可解釋離開的原因和打算。這樣你可以給他一個機會讓他早作打算給你加薪升職保留你或提供意見。你可以請假去求職，但很多雇主對此等要求是不太樂意的。但因你需要目前雇主的推薦書，最好是坦誠地與雇主談。大部份雇主均明白職員的心理——「人往高處爬，水往低處流」。如你給雇主充份時間通知你的去留，至少他（她）會敬佩你的誠實。

注意求新職時，你應比較衡量新舊職的長短處與利害。

除非你能在目前的職位步步高陞（當然薪金是隨職位和責任的改變而增加），你會考慮另謀高就的。終生永久的工作在美國是十分罕見的。如你仔細安排並循適當步驟通知雇主，應該是沒有問題的。

決定新工作時，薪金不是主要的因素。很多美國人願意接受一份薪金比以前工作為低的工作，因為他們認為以長遠計，新工作能帶給他們更多的安全感及好待遇。例如，你在一間食品店做工，時薪是三元八角，但你有受管理訓練的機會，當你成為經理時，你的時薪將獲增至六元。但你至少要做上一年以上才能獲得考慮給你這個經理職位。如果同時你亦在另一間食品公司找到另一份工作。時薪是四元七角五分，但這份工作沒有提供訓練。每小時多九角五分錢，看來是非常吸引人，但你可能一年後還是賺這麼多錢，你應怎麼選擇呢？你還是不要換職為上策，因目前的工作能給你特別訓練的機會，你也可以獲得更高薪的職位。況且受訓練後還可能使你從目前的公司轉往別公司。因此，還有同樣情

形時，你最好做長遠的考慮，勿為眼前的小利而錯過良機，金錢不是最主要的因素。

發展新技能

大部份美國人相信吸收經驗和學習新技能可以帶來升職和增薪機會。為此很多美國人公餘上學校習新技能以求上進。學習新技能來改善自己的經濟環境是值得鼓勵的。

或許你需要改進的技能是英語。首先要奠定你的英語基礎。有很多人沒有注意在工作上向同事學習英語是一個好方法，而且學的是實用的英語，當然有了工作仍應繼續抽閒上學唸書。很多地區設有英語班，教授移民和難民英語，你應向擔保人、志願機構和親友打聽那裡開設英文班。有些班別是免費的，有些只收少許費用。如日間工作可晚上唸書或

晚上工作，日間唸書。當然這是不容易的。但這一番努力是值得的。吃一點苦，將來生活可以安定一些。這是自己的前途問題。有了良好的英語基礎，申請工作的機會也比較多。但這並不表示你需要有完美的英語才可以找到工作，那是錯誤的想法。

除了學英語外，你可以考慮學習新技能，例如，你可以學藝成為機械師、電腦操作員、秘書或簿記員等，這些都是可以辦得到的，只要你有恆心，努力去學習英語，並受特別訓練便可。很多地方均開有特別訓練班。這些訓練班常是免費或只收少許費用的，大部份中學在晚上甚至在週末均有開設成年人教育計劃。社區學院收費低廉，提供很多職業技術訓練。或許你想做些小生意，經營生意需要學習很多新知識。（如簿記、稅務、地方規例等）

這些在成年人教育計劃或在社區學院中均有教授。如你的英語程度夠，這些你通通立即可以學。

以下是求職需要注意事項的摘要：

— 簡列你的經驗和技能（本手冊末端附有簡歷表模範作參考用。）

— 攜帶重要證件如身份證和社會安全證等。

— 求職謁見前作準備。

— 求職主要途徑

— — 親友和擔保人

— — 志願機構

— — 州立職業介紹所

— — 「招請工人」招貼

— — 直接詢問雇主。

— 安排應徵約會。

— 準備與工作有關的問題。

— 前往應徵時，衣着應適當。

— 準時應約，前往應徵。

— 準備回答人事主任或雇主問

題。

—要問清何時可知獲僱用與否
任職後應要注意事項的摘要

:

- 準時上班。
- 儘量避免遲到早退。
- 避免留下工作不願而離開。
- 如有不明之處，應立即提出疑問。
- 如受主管批評，不要介意。
- 一切記在職時的表現（不論好與壞）對你有長遠的影響。

換職時應要注意事項的摘要：

- 辭職前應給雇主充份時間準備。
- 避免頻頻換職，有損工作記錄。
- 辭職前，應向雇主請求推薦書。

—換新工作時，不要把眼前
的高薪視為先決條件。

—不要告假去求職。

SAMPLE
RESUME

Chang Kuo-Wah
678 Murray Road
Springville, N.Y. 00112
Telephone: (200) 555-9437

Residency Status

Admitted to the United States in accordance with the Refugee Act of 1980, on March 31, 1982. Employment authorized.

Education

Completed Chinese and Vietnamese high school (12 grades), Cholon School, Cholon, Vietnam; 1964.

Completed 2 years of English at Cholon English High School, Vietnam; 1966.

Employment/Experience

1975-80	Street vendor and farmer for a temporary living after the Communist takeover in April 1975.
1972-75	Military Construction Engineering Division, Region I, Vietnam. Responsible for maintenance of vital highways and bridges in Hue, Vietnam. Participated in limited combat actions.
1970-72	Interpreter/translator for Special Forces associated with the U.S. in Hue, Vietnam.
1966-70	Electrician for Nhat Quang electrical supply shop, doing some residential wiring and minor repairs of electrical appliances.

Language Capabilities: Vietnamese, Chinese and English.

Personal Data:

Birthdate: February 13, 1948
Nationality: Vietnamese
Marital status: Married, three children

Reference:

Jackson Herz
3542 Center Avenue
Springville, N.Y. 00114
Telephone: (200) 124-5773

Sample
Employment Application

1. Type of position _____ Date you can start _____ Salary desired _____

2. Name _____
(please print) LAST FIRST MIDDLE

3. Social Security # _____

4. Address _____
Street City State Zip Code
Telephone # () _____

5. Education:
(circle the highest grade you completed in each school)

	Name & location of school	Dates	Degree/Certificate
Elementary	1 2 3 4 5 6		
High School	7 8 9 10 11 12		
College	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8		
Professional/vocational training			

6. Employment:

(List all the jobs you held for the past 5 years, starting with the most recent.
You may include any other experience that you think is pertinent.)

From	To	Employer's name, address,	Salary	Position	Reason for
Mo./Yr.	Mo./Yr.	phone #		Duties	leaving

7. Do you own a car? _____

8. General State of Health Good Fair Poor

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

The following English draft served as the basis for this guide in Hmong, Chinese, Khmer, Lao, and Vietnamese. For each language, certain alterations were made to address the needs of the population in question. For that reason, the English version, while a reliable representation of the contents and certainly of the intent of the employment guide, is not a direct translation of any foreign-language version of the guide.

A GUIDE TO EMPLOYMENT

Now that you are in the United States, you probably have become aware that Americans place great importance on work. Everyone who is physically able to work is expected to do so. Even wealthy people in America work and not working when you are physically able to do so and jobs are available can result in great criticism.

Undoubtedly you have been told that it is very important for you to get a job. Perhaps you have been thinking that any job is better than no job at all. This might be true if you did not have any choices at all as to possible jobs. But most people looking for a job in the United States usually have some choices. The secret to getting a job consists of:

- o being aware of your skills and experience;
- o being aware of the kinds of jobs that may be available;
- o applying for the kind of job that your skills and experience give you advantages for;
- o knowing where to look for the best job you can get.

Before we continue discussing some important issues in getting a job, perhaps we ought to consider some of the things that many Americans believe about work:

- o Everyone who is able to should work. Those who do not work, when work is available, and depend on the government are considered a burden on society. Public assistance ('welfare') should be relied on only during an emergency --- for example, when no work is available.
- o Starting at an entry-level job and working one's way up from the 'bottom' to success is greatly admired.
- o The 'self-made man', that is, an individual who starts with little or nothing and by struggling and working very hard manages to succeed in his work, business or profession is an American folk-hero. Abraham Lincoln, one of America's most admired presidents, is an excellent example of a 'self-made man'.
- o In addition to training and skills, a good work record is considered essential if one hopes to get a good job. For people who are just entering the American job-market, a entry-level job serves the purpose of building a good work record. Consequently, it is expected that the person who is getting his first job will most typically get one that requires little or no experience.
- o Most Americans do not expect their first job to be the only job they will ever have. They expect to work their way to a better job. This may entail working for a promotion or looking for a better job with a different company. Experience, training and a good work record are considered necessary for getting a higher-paying job, or one with more responsibility and prestige.

Most Americans believe that the United States is the land of opportunity. Indeed, there are ample opportunities for many people in this country. However, we have to also be realistic about our expectations in this country. Many newcomers to America often tend to expect too much too soon. The country is currently undergoing serious economic problems. In many parts of the country there is high unemployment. Many cities lack adequate housing at a moderate price. This means that some refugees will have difficulty finding any job or reasonably priced housing. Under such circumstances you may have to accept a job that may not be entirely desirable, or you may have to live in housing that is not entirely satisfactory. During such times, you will have

to be especially patient and not lose hope. The history of this country is such that one can expect bad economic times to be followed by better times. During economic bad times, any job is better than being unemployed. Even an undesirable job allows you to gain experience and build a good job record. When better times finally arrive, you will be in a position to seek a better job. Most Americans believe that their lives will be better, that they will have higher paying jobs, that there will be improvement in their housing. Even during very bad economic times, most Americans keep their optimism. Most Americans will expect you to keep your hope for a better life even during bad economic times. For most of the refugees, this hope will most likely be realized.

Getting a good job depends on having the best information possible to base a job decision on. Because most Americans believe that the individual is responsible for making the most important decisions in his life, no one will feel or take the responsibility for making your job decisions. (Probably the freedom to make one's own decisions about important things is the most-prized freedom Americans have.) Thus, you will want to know as much as possible before you decide on a job.

In looking for a job, you should think about your experiences back home, the types of skills you may have developed over the years, and, just as important, the kinds of things you might enjoy doing for a living. There may be different kinds of jobs available. Thus, you will have to make important decisions in regard to selecting among the available jobs, and you should take into consideration the possible match between the available job and your experience.

As was noted before, Americans place great importance on work-experience. Just because you may not speak English well right now does not mean you should not look for a job. The experience you gain by working in an honest, productive job is experience that you will need to get promoted on this job or to find a better job elsewhere. Most Americans feel that a first job is mostly for the purpose of gaining experience. Such jobs are called 'entry-level' jobs. Employers who offer such entry-level jobs assume that the employee will have little or no experience. There is no shame attached to being employed in entry-level jobs. There is an American proverb that says, "You have to start somewhere." You may find the first job does not pay particularly well or it might involve work that one does not want to do all the time. The purpose for getting such jobs is an important one: you need work experience in this country. Even if you have technical skills that could be useful on a job here, and even if you speak English rather well, you still have to have work experience in the United States in order to get the better paying jobs. All employers want to hire workers who are capable, dependable, honest, and hard-working. The best way of proving such things is by having recommendations from former bosses. A good recommendation can often lead to a better job. Remember that even American college graduates often get entry-level jobs

in order to gain experience and start building a work-record.

As you probably have already discovered, there may be different types of jobs available. But not all of these jobs may be suitable for you. You will have to make important decisions in regard to applying for a job that may be suitable for you and that uses your experience and skills. For example, if you have worked in a shop as a clerk, you might want to look for a job as a sales clerk; if your experience has been in preparing meals in a restaurant, you may not find such experience advantageous in applying for a job as salesclerk. You need to think about your skills and experience to find the kind of job right for you. However, it might not be wise to wait for a job to become available that makes use of the exact kind of experience or skill you have had. You may have to be realistic and look for an entry-level job. Your immediate needs and the need to start building a work-record should be carefully considered. It might be quite awhile before the type of job that more closely fits your experience become available.

One of the first things that you will have to prepare yourself for is the job interview. The job interview is the occasion where an employer finds out about you and whether you are suitable for a job he might have available. It is also the occasion where you find out about what is involved in the job. In order to prepare yourself for the interview, you might want to do some of the following things:

- o Practice with a friend summarizing your past experience;
- o Ask a friend what kinds of experience he has found useful to tell an employer about;
- o Write down a brief summary of your skills and experience;
- o Prepare a list of questions about the job that you might want to ask;
- o Ask a friend about the kinds of forms you might be asked to fill out (perhaps your friend might have copies of such forms that he can share with you);
- o You might want to ask your sponsor or some other friend to practice the interview with you
- o During the practice interview, you might want to practice making eye-contact (Americans believe that you ought to look directly into the eyes of the person you are speaking to---avoiding eye-contact might be interpreted as a sign of evasiveness or even, by some people, as a sign of dishonesty);
- o You might also want to practice smiling during the interview; many Americans interpret a smile as a sign both of friendliness and of self-confidence;
- o Finally, you should practice answering questions that an employer is apt to make: why you are applying for a job to that company; whether you feel that you can do the work required, etc.

In general, you should try to remember all of the things you have done that you think will be of interest to a potential employer. One of the biggest problems most people have is in not recognizing all of the experiences that they may have had and that would be useful to tell a future employer about. Remember, experience does not mean just the kinds of things you may have been paid to do. Perhaps you assisted a relative in his or her shop when you were younger; perhaps you know how to cook well,

but you have never worked as a cook; or you may know how to drive a truck or a bus, but you have never worked as a driver. These are some of the experiences that may turn out to be quite useful in getting a job today. Not everything you have done in the past will prove particularly useful to all employers. You will have to decide which experiences you will tell an employer about. Whatever your experience might have been, it is best to be honest; say you have had no experience, if that is true.

Finding out what jobs are available will probably be the most difficult task you will have in finding a job. All Americans face the same problem in looking for a job. Jobs can often be found by:

- o reading the want-ads in newspapers;
- o contacting state employment offices;
- o contacting Voluntary Agencies and Mutual Assistance Associations;
- o looking for 'help wanted' signs in front of stores, factories, etc.;
- o asking your sponsor;
- o asking friends and neighbors.

Job Choices

Following are some questions you might want to ask about job choices:

Are all entry-level jobs the same?

No. These vary according to the nature of the business involved. An entry-level job just means that no experience is required for that job.

Do I have to know English to get a job?

No. There are many types of jobs where you will not need to know much English. Of course, the more English you know, the more opportunities there will be.

How do I know if a job is suitable for me?

In general, if your skills and experience are what are needed for the job, then the job is suitable. You should also feel that you can do the required work comfortably.

What about the pay? How important is this?

Every worker wants to be paid as much as he deserves. But gaining work-experience is a very important part of your first job. Also, how well you think you will do on the job is important. Getting a slightly better paying job that you may not do well on will not be worth the extra money in the long run. There are other questions that you should ask, such

- o cost of transportation
- o availability of transportation
- o distance from your home
- o hours during which you are expected to work

What do jobs pay?

There is a national minimum wage for most jobs (this is about \$3.65 an hour). Some jobs may pay less than the minimum if tips are involved (this is the case, for example, for waiters and waitresses, etc.). Often if

the job is one for which employees cannot be found readily, the pay may be higher. Also, if the job is late at night, the pay is often higher. Keep in mind that a job requiring little experience that pays very well might be a job that has special conditions attached to it (perhaps the job is especially unpleasant, or there might be some dangerous aspect involved). You should ask about the job and get all the information you can before deciding solely on the issue of money.

Should I look for a better job than an entry-level job?

If you have the skills and experience and if you speak sufficient English to get a job that requires certain skills, you should try to find such a job. But if you can't find one, you should not avoid looking for an entry-level job. The work experience gained will be worthwhile. Keep in mind that many highly-skilled Americans have often found themselves unable to find jobs that they were trained for. In such cases, these Americans gladly accept entry-level jobs.

Are some jobs better for me than others?

This is a difficult question to answer. But depending on what types of jobs might be available, the answer is probably "yes." It is sometimes difficult to see opportunities when they arise. In general, jobs that allow you to gain a skill are preferred to those that do not allow you to learn useful skills. Money may not be the most important criterion in choosing a job.

How long should I wait before looking for a job?

You should try and find a job as quickly as possible after arriving. Not only will this help you start building your work record, but it will be valuable in helping you meet more people, learn English, and, in general, help you improve your self-confidence.

How important are fringe benefits (medical insurance, vacation pay, etc.) in the consideration of a job?

Most entry-level jobs have few fringe benefits. You might wish to ask about medical insurance, but, in general, you should show more interest in what is needed for the job than in fringe benefits and pay. Many employers will be reluctant to hire you if you seem more interested in the pay and benefits than in the kind of work that you would be

There are some additional things you might wish to consider when deciding on a job:

- o Will I learn any new skill on the job?
- o How much will it cost me to ~~travel~~^{travel} to the job?
- o Will I have to pay for any special clothing?
- o Will I have to dress in a certain style?
- o Is there any special equipment that I will have to purchase?
- o How difficult will it be for me to get to the job? (This is important if the job is at night and buses are not running regularly.)
- o Will I be comfortable working in such a job?
- o Will I be expected to work over-time or on weekends or holidays?
- o Is working on weekends a regular part of the job?
- o Is there provision for sick-pay?

In answering some of the questions above, you might want to ask a friend if he or she already knows the answer. For some jobs, working on weekends is considered part of the job and you may not be paid more. For other jobs, working over-time or on weekends might entitle you to additional pay. Whenever you expect to be paid additional money on the job, it is wise to consult with your supervisor to determine what the policy is. Also keep in mind that during difficult economic times, many people are happy to work at any job---even one that requires over-time or work on weekends without any expectation that they will be paid at a higher rate than their regular rate.

Getting a Job

Once you have appraised your experience and skills, and you have identified the types of jobs that you feel are suitable for you, you will have to try to locate possible jobs. Looking for actual jobs will probably be the most complicated part of getting a job. In addition to the persons and places that you should contact for possible job openings discussed above, you should also keep in mind that there are private, profit-making employment agencies that often advertise job openings (sometimes such jobs appear listed in want-ads and you will have no way of knowing whether the ad has been placed by the employer or by the private employment agency). Such private agencies charge a fee (this might be equivalent to as much as one month's wages, although the fee is often for far less). Usually the fee is paid by the employee, although sometimes the fee is paid by the employer. When answering a job ad, you should determine whether the ad has been placed by a private agency. If the ad has been, in fact, placed by a private employment agency, that agency is required by law to inform you that that is the case. Private agencies offer the advantage that the job-seeker will be sent only to places that have actual jobs available. Also, the private agencies will only refer you to a job for which you meet the job requirements. This can save you a lot of time, but such conveniences are costly. If you do decide to use the services of a private employment agency, be sure to determine (1) who pays the fee, and (2) what the fee will be exactly.

Preparing for the Interview

Once you have located possible job openings, you should take the following steps:

- o Make copies of appropriate documents that you may have to leave with the employer: letters of recommendation (if any), certificates of various sorts. You should not leave original documents with the employer since these might get lost. Place copies of all documents in a large envelop.
- o You will have to either go directly to the employer or else make an appointment over the telephone or in person with him/her for an interview.
- o You might want to arrange for a friend to go along with you to act as an interpreter---if you feel the need to do so. It will be an advantage to you if you can go to the interview alone. But if you do not speak any English at all, you may want an interpreter to assist you. You might also have to get a friend to make the initial appointment, if you do not speak sufficient English to do so. Your job counselor might also be able to assist you in this part of the process.
- o You should dress conservatively for the job. If you are a man you might consider wearing a tie. However you decide to dress, be sure that you do not go to the interview dressed too informally (such as wearing a T-shirt or sandals).
- o If you are a man, you should be sure that your hair is of an appropriate length; very long hair is often looked on with disfavor by many employers.
- o Personal cleanliness is very important; you should take care that your finger-nails are trimmed and clean, and you should avoid using very strong perfume or eau de cologne.
- o You should plan on arriving a few minutes prior to the interview; it will be very disadvantageous to you if you should arrive late for the interview. If you think you will be late, call the employer and either explain that you will be late or request an interview for a later time. Arriving late without having called ahead of time will not be helpful to you.
- o You might want to get a friend to help you with preparing a short resume. A resume is a document that lists important information about you: your address, your telephone number, your social security number, your date of birth, a summary of your work experience, etc.). Above all, you will want to give the employer something with your name and address so that he might be able to contact you about the job.
- o You should also list some of the questions that you might want to ask the employer during the interview. Among these might be:
 - (1) When could you expect to start working?
 - (2) What hours and days would you be expected to work?
 - (3) What would you be expected to do on the job?
 - (4) Who would be your supervisor?
 - (5) Are there any requirements as to clothing or equipment?
 - (6) Are there any special job regulations that you would have to observe (health or safety)?
 - (7) Would you be taught any skills on the job?
 - (8) What is the pay?
 - (9) When and in what form would you be paid?
 - (10) Is there health insurance?
 - (11) Does anyone speak your language that you might be able to ask questions of on the job?
 - (12) How will you find out if you got the job?

Feb 24, 82

The employer will expect you to be asking such questions. There is no shame in asking such questions since most Americans would ask similar questions during a job interview. Keep in mind that no two companies will offer the same benefits, or have the same working

conditions and requirements. In some companies, you might have to join a union in order to get a job there. The pay schedule will differ between companies. In some places you get paid weekly, in others every two weeks, yet in other places you might get paid on a monthly basis. It is important to keep in mind that it is often the practice in many companies that first-time workers will have to wait for one pay period to pass before receiving their first pay. This means that if the company pays on a semi-monthly basis, that you will not receive your first pay until you have worked for two weeks. You will ultimately be paid for the first two weeks you worked (generally when you leave the job). It is in your interest for you to find out what the pay policy is so that you are not disappointed. Do not be in the position of assuming that your employer is cheating you because you did not receive your pay when you thought you should have. Find out the facts and avoid an embarrassing situation.

If you are offered a job that you decide is not the kind of job you want, do not be hesitant about saying that you don't want the job. If you do accept a job and then decide that you really do not want it after all, inform the employer as quickly as possible. Do not be in the position of accepting two jobs at the same time and then taking your time in deciding which job you might really want. You could very easily wind up with no job at all.

Keeping a Job

You will probably find that getting a job is more difficult than keeping one. However, there are some important things you should consider in keeping a job. You will have been hired because your employer thinks you will be able to do the job. He/She also probably believes that you are going to be dependable. This is one of the most important factors in keeping a job---dependability. Dependability means that your employer can trust you to be at work when you are supposed to.

Dependability also means being on time for work. Employers tend to view people who are always late for work, or late returning from coffee-breaks and meal-breaks, or who leave earlier from work than they are supposed to, as non-productive or "sloppy" employees. In many places, workers are expected to 'punch the clock' when they come to work and when they leave. This is done so that the employer has a record of when the employee is actually at work. Pay is determined by the time-clock records. Not only does the employer know whether you are coming late or leaving early, but you are likely to be 'docked' pay if you are not on time. If your work-record shows that you are often late, it will make it difficult for you to get another job. A consistent pattern of tardiness may result in your being fired.

Many places of employment close on legal holidays, on weekends (Saturdays and Sundays), and perhaps on other special days. You should inquire when you are expected to come to work. Also keep in mind that not all places of work observe the same days

off. The best person to ask is your supervisor.

If you are ill and cannot come to work, you should contact your supervisor and tell him so. Most places of work will understand your not coming to work if you are ill. Most employers will show compassion if there is a death in your family (this is generally limited to close members of the family, such as a child, a parent, a brother or sister; grandparents as well as uncles and aunts are sometimes regarded as close members of the family; the death of a cousin or of some distant relative may not be regarded as sufficient reason not to come to work). Be sure that you contact your supervisor before you are scheduled to arrive at work. This is especially necessary if your supervisor has to find someone to replace you while you are not at work.

Except for illness and death in the family, most employers expect their employees to be at work and to arrive at work on time. If you are often late to work or if you fail to come to work for reasons that your supervisor does not accept as sufficient, you will likely be regarded as undependable. Keep in mind that what you do on the job will follow you for a long time.

Sometimes you may feel that a religious holiday requires your absence from work. Before you decide to be absent from work, be sure to discuss this with your supervisor. Many, but not all, employers are willing to accommodate work-schedules to special religious observations. This may require a lot of planning, both on your part and on your supervisor's part. Consult early with your supervisor. If you decide that you should not go to work because of Tet or some special religious holiday, your supervisor may regard you as undependable.

One final hint for keeping a job. Do not leave your work just because the time has come for you to leave. Depending on the type of job you have, you should not leave until you finish your tasks. If someone is supposed to replace you when you leave, don't leave before that person arrives (unless your supervisor tells you that you can leave). For example, suppose you are in charge of a store and you are scheduled to leave at six o'clock and that you are the only worker in the store at six o'clock. Further, suppose that your replacement is late. It will be considered highly irresponsible for you to leave at the scheduled time if this means leaving the store unattended. Your replacement has the obligation to be on time, but you also have an obligation to your employer in this case. Some employers will react angrily and very likely fire both your replacement for arriving late and you for being irresponsible. Let us take a different situation. Suppose you are a waiter in a restaurant and the time has come to leave for the day. You should not leave until you finish whatever tasks remain undone. Of course you can leave if your supervisor tells you to. Often this means that you might have to work beyond the time you are scheduled to leave. You may not get paid additional money if you stay a few minutes beyond your regular quitting time. If you leave your work without finishing whatever tasks that remain to be done, you may

be regarded by your employer as undependable.

If you do all that is required of you on the job, and if you do all of this well, you should have no problems keeping the job. Find out what is required; there is no shame in asking a question. You will be expected to ask whenever you need to know something. This also helps the supervisor to make sure that you do your job well. If you hesitate asking for information, and damage occurs because you did not ask, your supervisor will probably be displeased. In the United States, your supervisor is held responsible for your work. Help your supervisor do his work by asking questions that are necessary for you to do your work.

Sometimes a situation may arise where your supervisor will find fault with something that you are doing on the job. Americans generally listen patiently to whatever criticisms their supervisors might make and attempt to do whatever their supervisors suggest. You will have to learn to do this also. That is, do not be embarrassed because your supervisor criticizes you. Remember, his job is to make sure you do your job well. Try to follow his suggestions. You might want to ask your supervisor later on if you are doing what he has suggested. This is always a good step to take. Remember, you can also avoid some criticism by asking questions ahead of time. Americans expect to be criticized by their supervisors at times. Criticism is not something to be alarmed over. You will have to learn not to feel anger or shame when you are criticized. It is part of the work experience.

Sometimes some supervisors are overly critical or they make unreasonable demands on the employees. Should this happen to you, you might want to talk frankly to your supervisor, in private. You should tell him how you feel. Often, supervisors will take steps to eliminate conflicts on the job. But sometimes some supervisors do not see the need for this. In such a case, you might have to weigh carefully the advantages and disadvantages in continuing in such a job.

Sometimes co-workers may tease you. Americans often tease each other as a show of friendliness (this is especially true among males). It is difficult at first to tell whether someone is teasing you out of friendliness or for some other reason. The best thing you might do with friendly teasing is to learn to ignore it. If your co-workers are teasing you out of friendliness, and if you ignore it, they will soon stop teasing you. If you feel that you are being teased not out of friendliness, you should talk to your supervisor and see what suggestions he might have to offer. Remember, Americans enjoy making jokes and teasing each other. You will soon learn when such joking and teasing is done out of friendliness. ~~It~~ You will probably even come to enjoy the intended humor.

Getting along with your co-workers is almost as important as being dependable. The ability to get along with co-workers is noted by your supervisor and forms part of

of your work record. You will also have to find out if there are special customary practices observed among your co-workers. For example, it might be the custom that in some factories certain tools are not shared. If you need a certain tool, you might have to ask the supervisor directly. In other factories, tools are shared, and if you need a certain tool, you can ask a co-worker for one if he is not using it. Also, keep in mind that Americans generally do not share food at work. Do not offer to share your lunch with anyone at work if this is not the usual custom there. However, customs do vary from place to place. In some places, the workers might be expected to stop at a bar and drink beer before going home. In other places, the workers might go their separate ways with little socializing with co-workers after work. In many places, eating meals together (but not necessarily sharing food) is an important part of the daily routine at work. Sometimes you might be expected by your co-workers to eat your meal with them; sometimes it is expected that you should not eat your meal with your co-workers unless you are invited to do so. In general, however, most Americans enjoy eating meals together and you will be invited to do so. You should try to be observant of these customs. Perhaps you might want to discuss some of these customs with your supervisor.

Getting along with your co-workers, being dependable, and doing the best job you are capable of doing are all important for keeping a job.

Getting a New Job

There will come a time when you might want to look for a new job. You might have gotten tired with your present job (it happens to a lot of Americans) or you want to make more money or you may want to seek new opportunities. You might also have to get a new job because you have lost your current job.

If your employer cannot keep you because his business does not allow it (the business might not be making enough money---not all business are always successful), you might get laid off. Getting laid off is not the same thing as getting fired. Getting laid off just means that your job no longer exists for reasons that you are not responsible for. If you get laid off, you generally are covered by unemployment insurance. This means, if you meet the requirements for the insurance, that you will receive a certain amount of money while you look for another job. In most states you are generally covered by the insurance for a maximum of six months. However, keep in mind that not all jobs are covered by unemployment insurance, and that you have to work for a certain period of time before you can qualify. Also, you must be unemployed for some specific period of time before you can qualify for unemployment benefits. These requirements vary from state to state. The amount of money that you receive from the unemployment insurance will most likely be a lot less than you were making on the job. Getting laid off will not be held against you since it is understood that you lost

your job through no fault of your own. If you should get laid off, you should try to get a letter of recommendation from your former supervisor that explains why you lost your job. This will be of great assistance in securing a new job. Keep in mind that if you do get laid off, you will probably also lose any medical benefits that you might have been entitled to on the old job.

Most Americans regard getting fired as a very serious matter. First of all, in many states you may not be entitled to unemployment insurance benefits if you get fired. Further, you will probably not be able to get a positive letter of recommendation from your employer if he/she fired you. This will make it difficult to secure another job. As we discussed above, work experience is considered extremely important. Getting fired from a job forms part of your work experience. You cannot totally ignore it once it has happened. You will be asked why you left your job. More likely than not your former employer will be contacted for information on your work experience. Therefore, it is best to avoid getting fired. If you feel that your employer is dissatisfied with your work, you should speak to him about it and ask him directly if you should quit the job (before getting fired). Most employers will give the employee the opportunity to quit before getting fired.

Quitting a job may not be to your advantage if (1) you quit often (say you only work for two months, and then you quit) or (2) you quit without giving sufficient notice. While getting fired will be seen as very serious, changing jobs often is also seen something undesirable---it is considered a sign of undependability. You do not want to establish a pattern of working for a few weeks and then quitting. If you work for a considerable amount of time (say around six months) and then quit, it will not necessarily be seen as a sign of undependability. If you decide to quit, you should give ample notice to your supervisor. Find out how much time is usually required or expected. In most places, two weeks is sufficient time. Keep in mind that if you tell your supervisor that you plan to quit the following day, he might decide to fire you immediately because of what he will consider a sign of undependability. There is no shame in quitting a job---just notify your supervisor with sufficient time.

Other circumstances may arise that require you to leave your job. For example, you might get hurt on the job and be unable to work. Most jobs have workmen's compensation. This means that if you get hurt on the job, you can expect to receive some benefits to take care of you. However, these benefits may take some time before you start getting them, and you may have to prove that you were actually injured while at work. Suppose that you get ill and cannot continue to work. Your company might have disability insurance that will entitle you to receive some benefits. There are many factors that have to be considered when you are unable to continue work. You should ask your supervisor for details, just in case. Also, if you get too old to work, you might be entitled to Social Security benefits. These benefits are determined

on the basis of how long you have worked in jobs that are covered by Social Security insurance (not all jobs are so covered).

But suppose that you just feel that it is time to look for a better job---one that has better opportunities, or one that pays better. How should you go about it? Probably the most prudent course to follow is not to quit your present job until you are assured of having a new one. You should not take time off from your present job to look for a new one (your employer, should he find out what you are doing, may well get angry and possibly fire you). You might want to inform your employer that you intend looking for a new job and that you intend leaving your present job at a given time (say, in several weeks). You might also explain to your employer why you are thinking about leaving your job. This gives him an opportunity to possibly give you an offer. You might request time off to go to job interviews, but many employers might not be happy about your request. This is a very delicate situation since you will need a letter of recommendation from your present employer. It is best to be honest and forward with your present employer. Most employers know that just about all workers are interested in better opportunities. If you give adequate notice of your intentions, at least your employer will respect you for being honest.

In looking for a new job, be sure that whatever advantages you might gain on the new job outweigh possible problems that may arise as you go about getting the new job.

Unless you get a promotion (and more pay) on your present job, the time will come when you will probably consider getting another job. If you plan ahead and follow whatever procedures are necessary for informing your present employer of your intentions, you ought to be all right.

In considering a new job, keep in mind that money is not always the most important consideration. Many Americans have been known to take a new job that pays less than the old one because they felt that the new job would lead to a better paying one in the long run. For example, suppose you are working as a clerk in a food store and you are making \$3.80 an hour, and you are also receiving training for a manager's position. When you become manager you will be paid \$5.00 an hour, but it will take you at least a year before you can be considered for such a position. In the mean time you are offered a job in a different food store at \$4.75 an hour, but you will not receive any training. It might be tempting to take the job that pays 95 cents more an hour, but you will probably be making the same amount a year hence. What should you do? It seems that the wisest thing is to remain on the job that pays the lesser amount, since it will allow you to receive training and ultimately get a better paying job. Also, the training will also make it possible to leave your present company and go on to another better job. In making a decision you should consider what effects such a decision will have in the future. You should try to determine whether there are

opportunities involved---money is not always the only consideration.

Developing New Skills

Most Americans believe that by gaining experience and learning new skills, it will be possible to go on to better jobs and make more money. In order to do this, many Americans go to school part-time to acquire the necessary skills to go on to a better job. There is nothing unusual in trying to improve yourself economically by acquiring new skills.

Perhaps the first skill you will want to improve is your English. While getting a job and talking with your co-workers is very valuable for the purpose of improving your English, you ~~may want to take a course in English as a Second Language.~~ ^{should continue studying English as a second} There are many kinds of English language programs available. You should seek information on available programs from your sponsor, the voluntary agency that has assisted you, and perhaps from your friends who might be taking a class in English as a second language. Classes are usually available that charge very little. It may be difficult to work all day and then go to classes at night to study English, but the sacrifice is well-worth it. If you are competing for jobs with people who speak English well, then you will have to improve your English in order not to be at a severe disadvantage. This does not mean that jobs will not be available to you unless you speak perfect English, but it does mean that the better your English becomes, the more opportunities you will have.

Besides improving your English, you might consider learning a new skill. Perhaps you might want to learn to be a skilled mechanic, or learn how to operate a computer, how to be a secretary or perhaps a bookkeeper. All of these things are possible, but they all require an adequate command of English and special training. Such special training is widely available at little or no cost. Adult Education programs are available at most public high schools at night (sometimes even on weekends). Community colleges also offer many types of vocational and technical training at low cost. Perhaps you might be interested in opening up your own business. There is much to learn about operating a business (e.g., bookkeeping, taxes, local regulations, etc.) that is often taught in Adult Education programs or in community colleges. These are accessible to you if your English is adequate.

CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO CONSIDER IN GETTING A JOB:

- o try summarizing your experience and skills
- o get copies of necessary documents
- o prepare yourself for the interview
- o find out about available jobs by contacting
 - want ads
 - state employment agencies
 - voluntary agencies
 - friends and neighbors
 - asking employers directly
- o arrange for an appointment
- o be ready to ask questions about the job

- o dress appropriately for the interview
- o be on time for the interview
- o be prepared to ask questions about the job
- o determine how you will be told whether you got the job or not

CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO CONSIDER AFTER YOU GET THE JOB

- o always try to arrive at work on time
- o avoid leaving the job if there is still work to be done
- o inform your supervisor when you are unable to work
- o always ask questions when you do not understand something
- o do not be alarmed when you are criticized by your supervisor
- o remember that what you do on the job will follow you for a long time

CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN YOU WANT TO GET A NEW JOB

- o give sufficient notice of your intention to quit
- o avoid a bad work record by quitting jobs often
- o get a letter of recommendation from your present employer---before quitting
- o do not consider money as the most important factor in getting a new job
- o do not take time off from your present job to look for a new one